

December 8, 1983

Index Tape 1/A

:20 He was born in 1928 in Kaesong, Korea (in North Korea).

2:30 He recalls his childhood days during Japanese occupation and his educational experience under Japanese rule. He was the first generation to have experienced entire Japanese education with the Japanese language. He also was allowed to enter Japanese high school and was one of three Korean applicants out of 300 who was accepted into the Japanese high school.

6:35 The Japanese Air Forces was very popular among some of the younger Koreans. He was accepted and given a Japanese name, Umeda. He had a inner urge to out do Japanese, that was one of the reasons he joined.

9:00 Relates his high school experience of being beaten up by Japanese upper classmen and also being accused of being "Japanese" by his fellow Koreans.

11:30 He was accepted into cadet school for the Japanese Air Force. He passed the test for radio man and was to spend two years in training but as events where changing rapidly his training was cut short to one year. He was sent to Kumamoto, Kyushu. He also recalled the day when the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. He knew that the war was coming to an end.

21:20 When the WW II ended he was in a state of confusion. Some of his fellow pilots wanted to die while some wanted to live. Being Korean he was urged by his commander to leave and go back to Korea. When he arrived in Hakata, Kyushu he saw tens of thousands of Koreans who were probably conscripted laborers who were trying to get back to Korea.

27:00 As they were leaving for Korea, they ran into mine fields and so they just followed the tide which took about 24 hours, the rest of the journey took three days.

Index Tape 1/B--K. W. Lee

31:00 Recalled that upon his arrival in the port city of Pusan, there must have been a million Koreans looking for their relative or friends. Japanese Army was still in control of Korea to maintain law and order until the American army arrived.

35:00 Once he began to settle down after the war in Korea, he faced adjustment problems. Having been trained in Japanese schools, he could not read or write his native Korean language. He entered a Korean high school only to be the subject of a student strike for his part in the Japanese Air Force. He spent one day in the high school before being kicked out. Facing an identity crisis he decided to go to Japan. He never made it because the Korean smuggler never showed up after taking his deposit.

40:50 By 1946, he had spent a year in a Korean high school in his home town and afterwards decided to go to the university for about three years. By 1948 he had bribed his way and finally got his passport and visa.

46:00 He was sponsored by the principal of a private school in Nashville called Morgan Prep-School for a fee of \$500.00 When he arrived he found out that this school was a reform school. Recalls his trip to America on ship and some of the experiences.

52:00 After arriving in San Francisco he spent some time there and then continued on by train to Chicago. He recalled meeting a black woman who had to move to another section of the train because they crossed the Mason-Dixon line. He stayed at the reform school for about three months. Went to Detroit to stay with his cousin.

Index Tape 2/A--K. W. Lee

1:00 Worked in a whore house bring drinks to the customers. He could not make enough money so he ran an ad in the paper. He was hired by a Nisei farmer but the work was too hard and left after two weeks.

3:00 During the Korean War about sixty Korean students tried to join the army but were not accepted. He then went into journalism. He entered West Virginia University and majored in journalism for three years and went two years to the University of Illinois.